The future of the RCVS Fellowship

A CONSULTATION
May 2014
Background to the consultation

History

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) has been awarding Fellowships to its members for 138 years. The Supplemental Royal Charter of 1876 gave the College power to create Fellows “in order more effectually to promote and encourage the study of veterinary medicine and surgery”.

Initially, such Fellows had to be at least 26 years old, have practised for five years or have been professors in a veterinary school and passed a special examination. When introducing the first Fellowships, the Council was enabled, for a six-month transition period, to elect without any examination up to five per cent of the members as Fellows, provided they had practised for 15 years. The Charter restricted membership of the Council and of the Board of Examiners to Fellows, although this restriction was later lifted. The age limit for Fellows was reduced in 1914 to 23 years, with a minimum period in practice of two years. A further Charter in 1932 gave the College power to appoint two Fellows each year without examination “on account of their special eminence in Veterinary Science”, provided they were members of 20 years standing.

Over the years, the Fellowship has developed further, and currently it is awarded to candidates either on the basis of a thesis, or for their “Meritorious Contributions to Learning” (MCL). The subject of a thesis “may include any aspect of the art or science of veterinary medicine, whether clinical, experimental or otherwise, or may relate to the general development of the veterinary profession.” The level should be “comparable with a higher degree awarded after the equivalent of three years of full time postgraduate research study”. Currently, a thesis can be submitted by anyone who has been qualified for at least five years and is a member of the RCVS.

The Fellowship by “Meritorious Contributions to Learning” can be awarded to those who have been qualified for at least 15 years, and requires the candidate to present a body of published works on a topic demonstrating their contribution to the area of knowledge over the period in question.

The RCVS also awards up to three Honorary Fellowships each year, on the grounds of “special eminence and services to the cause of veterinary science”.

The route to Fellowship via an examination was closed in 1994. This enabled candidates to be examined on a subject of their choice, with no pre-defined syllabus. This approach was no longer considered to be viable or in line with acceptable quality assurances practice for running examinations.

There are currently 236 Fellows on the RCVS Register out of a total of 22,579 practising members, 2,647 of whom are practising overseas. This is roughly 1% of the practising membership. (Figures from the RCVS Register, as at 11 December 2013). The numbers grow slowly, with around two or three new Fellows appointed each year, in addition to those elected as Honorary Fellows (HonFRCVS). It is RCVS’s stated position that the FRCVS is one of the College’s highest and oldest awards to which many more in the profession should aspire. But concern remains that the standards over time have been variable, recognition by the academic community is patchy, and lack of sustained tutorial support for practising veterinary surgeons to develop an original thesis makes achievement of FRCVS an unrealistic ambition for many.

In 2010, the RCVS set up a Working Party chaired by the former Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor
Sir Kenneth Calman, to consider veterinary specialist qualifications with a view to making recommendations for a simplified structure. Amongst other things, the Working Party was asked to look at the place of the Fellowship within the RCVS framework of qualifications, and see whether there was a need for new or alternative routes to the RCVS Fellowship. The Working Party noted that, although FRCVS provided a developmental route for those with an interest in a subject where no appropriate Diploma examination was available, there was a need to consider whether there were sufficient support structures for vets embarking on a Fellowship thesis. After a period of consultation, the working party made a series of recommendations. These were accepted by RCVS Council in June 2012. It was recommended that:

a. **The RCVS should actively promote – both to the profession and to the public – the Diploma of Fellowship as the highest award issued by the College. Achievement of the Fellowship should continue to be one of the routes for clinicians to gain veterinary specialist status. This is particularly important as RCVS phases out its Diplomas in favour of European Diplomas.**

b. **Further work should be undertaken by the RCVS to develop additional routes to the Fellowship to make it an award that more practising clinicians can achieve. For example, the existing routes of Fellowship by Thesis and by Meritorious Contributions to Learning could be supplemented by a new route to recognise “Meritorious Contributions to Clinical Practice”. A working group should be formed to develop the criteria for this new route to the Fellowship with a view to producing explicit statements on the standards required for each route and guidance for examiners, in line with the Level 8 descriptor. Revised byelaws will also be needed to enact these changes. Periods of clinical training under supervision should be included in the requirements.**

c. **Veterinary specialists who have been on the RCVS List of Specialists for a continuous period of 10 years should be awarded the title of RCVS Honorary Fellow (HonFRCVS), to recognise their longstanding contribution to their specialty. This will require a change to the RCVS byelaws for the Fellowship, which currently restricts the award of Honorary Fellowships to three per year.**

In the light of these recommendations, the Fellowship Working Party, chaired by Professor Gary England, was set up in 2013 to pursue these ideas further and produce more detailed proposals.

This consultation paper sets out the proposals from the Fellowship Working Party on which the profession’s views are now sought.
Fellowship Working Party membership and terms of reference

Members

Professor G C W England BVetMed PhD DVetMed DVR CertVA DVRep DipACT DipECAR FHEA FRCVS (Chair)

Professor M Bennett BVSc PhD FRCPath MRCVS

Dr J V Davies BVetMed PhD DVR DipECVS DipECVDI MRCVS

Mr J C Fishwick VetMB MA DipECBHM DCHP MRCVS

Mrs F Harcourt-Brown BVSc DipECZM FRCVS

Professor Stuart Reid BVMS PhD DVM DipECVPH FRSE MRCVS

Remit

• To take forward the recommendations of the Specialisation Working Party.

• Report to Education Committee on additional routes to the Fellowship that would make it an award that more practising clinicians can achieve, as per the recommendations agreed by Council (for example, creating a new route of ‘Meritorious Contributions to Clinical Practice’).

• Propose explicit statements on the standards required for all routes for the Fellowship, including guidance for examiners in line with the QAA Level 8 qualification descriptor;

• Propose revised bye-laws to enact the required changes.

• Propose new guidelines.

• To develop a new concept of a learned society.

• To consider the future of the existing thesis route.

• To develop criteria for three new MCL routes, ie MCK (Meritorious Contributions to Knowledge); (MCCP) Meritorious Contributions to Clinical Practice; and (MCProfession) Meritorious Contributions to the Profession.

The Working Party has met three times, in January, April and October 2013. Although initially it set out to follow up the recommendations from the Specialisation Working Party, after discussion, it was agreed that it should look further into ideas for developing the Fellowship along the lines of a ‘learned society’, as this was perceived to have more value than merely adding routes to the existing model.

In July 2013, it circulated its early ideas to existing Fellows and the British Veterinary Association (BVA). Feedback from these soundings has informed the proposals that are set out below.
Summary of the proposals

1. The purpose of these proposals is to develop the Fellowship of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons into a learned society, where members are recognised for their achievement in one of three areas:
   
a. Meritorious Contribution to the Veterinary Profession
   
b. Meritorious Contribution to Knowledge
   
c. Meritorious Contribution to Clinical Practice

2. It is intended that the new routes to Fellowship will enable veterinary surgeons from all facets of the profession to have a realistic opportunity of becoming Fellows.

3. These proposals are designed to provide a framework for professional development and recognition for the next two decades.

4. It is anticipated that these proposals will increase the size of the Fellowship to approximately five per cent of the RCVS practising membership, particularly by providing a route to the Fellowship for practising clinicians, and will ensure that the RCVS is able to recognise sustained achievement by veterinary surgeons.

5. Fellows and Specialists are different categories of recognition by the RCVS: Fellows are not necessarily, nor automatically, Specialists, and Specialists are not necessarily, nor automatically, Fellows. However, the Specialist level of recognition is likely to be a significant component for many who apply to become a Fellow.

6. It is hoped that increasing the size of the Fellowship to approximately five per cent of the RCVS practising membership will provide the basis for a dynamic organisation with a strong collective identity able to fulfil the remit of a learned society.

7. It is anticipated that links will be made with the RCVS’s independent charitable arm, RCVS Knowledge, to develop the learned society role for the new Fellowship.

8. The proposals include discontinuing the award of the Honorary Fellowship by the RCVS. The new route to achieving Fellowship by Meritorious Contribution to the Profession would subsume this.

9. There would be no change for existing Honorary Fellows, who may choose either to retain the title Honorary Fellow or elect to use the title Fellow.

10. There will be no change for existing Fellows or those currently registered with RCVS for the Fellowship examination by Thesis or MCL. The thesis route would continue to be available for enrolled candidates until their current enrolment period expired.

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1 Specialist status is a form of accreditation for the individual that is subject to revalidation, and which only applies while the individual is working in specialist referral practice for at least 50% of their time. The Fellowship, on the other hand, is a mark of esteem by the College, recognising significant achievement and contribution to the profession. A Fellow might not necessarily be working as a specialist.
11. If adopted, this proposal would result in the eventual closure of the route to Fellowship by Thesis. In common with many other professions, it is now considered more appropriate that work previously submitted for consideration for Fellowship by Thesis be submitted within frameworks such as professional Doctoral programmes, where consistency of achievement and quality can be assured across the diversity of veterinary subjects. Professional Doctorates are increasingly available from a number of universities, not just those with veterinary schools.

12. It is suggested that increased use of the Honorary Associate route should be made for non-veterinary surgeons and that work should be undertaken to establish how this route might be broadened to include veterinary-related professionals.

**Principles of the proposals**

13. This proposal is designed to move the Fellowship from an examination-based award to a formal learned society, fulfilling duties that would be part of the Charter function of the RCVS, and aligned with the new strategic direction of RCVS Knowledge.

14. The Fellowship as a learned society will develop its own strategy and objectives, but it is proposed that governance arrangements will ensure that these are aligned to the strategic objectives of the RCVS.

15. Careful consideration will be needed regarding the governance arrangements for the Fellowship. In the first instance the Fellowship would be established under the auspices of the RCVS Council, but in the future, consideration could be given to placing the Fellowship within the RCVS Knowledge governance structure.

16. The main objective of the new Fellowship will be to advance veterinary standards by providing a resource of independent knowledge for the benefit of the veterinary profession. The Fellowship as a collective body will be strategic and not reactive. The Fellowship will not seek to be representative of the veterinary profession, nor would it normally respond to consultations. The Fellowship will aim to promulgate and be a source of scientific fact, not opinion. It is proposed that the Fellowship will play a role in knowledge transfer and will undertake reviews, and establish lecture and seminar series, possibly under the auspices of RCVS Knowledge.

17. It is likely that the foundation of the activities of the Fellows will be based on:

- Advancing veterinary standards by undertaking independent scientific reviews to establish scientific fact
- Being a source of evidence-based fact and promulgating these findings
- Promoting excellence in the veterinary profession and communicating this to the public and
- Nurturing the next generation of veterinary professionals.
18. The Fellowship will require leadership and it is proposed that it will have a Chair and officers responsible to the Fellows and to the RCVS. It is expected that Fellowship officers will serve a three-year term with the option for this to be renewed only once following one term out of office.

19. The new Fellowship would be quite distinct from other professional specialist groups, such as the BVA specialist divisions and other subject associations, in that it would neither represent the profession nor any specialist group. Notwithstanding this difference, it is anticipated that many members of these specialist groups and associations will contribute significantly as individuals to the composition and running of the Fellowship.

The structure of the new Fellowship

20. Once it is up and running, it is proposed that at steady state the Fellowship will comprise up to approximately five per cent of the RCVS membership, ensuring both distinction and critical mass.

21. Existing Fellows would become part of the Fellowship and there would be no change to the terms of the award of their Diploma of Fellowship. Explicitly, there would be no requirement for existing Fellows to pay an annual fee, unlike for new Fellows.

22. Candidates currently registered for the current Fellowship by Thesis or by Meritorious Contributions to Learning under the current bye-laws would become part of the Fellowship upon successful examination of their thesis, but there would be no change to the terms of the award of their Fellowship Diploma. Once awarded their Fellowship under the current bye-laws, there would be no requirement for them to pay an annual fee, unlike new Fellows. Those registered for the Fellowship by Thesis would still be able to register for a new Fellowship if they preferred, as would any other member of the RCVS.

23. Existing Honorary Fellows would become part of the new Fellowship but there would be no change to the terms of their award. Explicitly there would be no requirement for an annual fee from Honorary Fellows.

24. Honorary Fellows could choose either to retain the title Honorary Fellow, or to adopt the title of Fellow without paying the new Fellow fees.

25. The new route of Meritorious Contribution to the Profession would replace the Honorary Fellowship and no new Honorary Fellowships would therefore be awarded once the new Fellowship system was in place.

26. New Fellows would be elected following an application and review process. There would be no application fee; however, upon election, there would be a joining fee and an annual Fellowship fee.

27. New Fellows must continue to be registered with the RCVS and pay the relevant annual RCVS retention fee to remain as Fellows.

28. It is proposed that the Fellowship would be governed by a Fellowship Board, which would comprise (a) the Chair, (b) a Vice-Chair from the RCVS Operational Board, (c) a Vice-Chair from the Fellowship, (d) three Election Panel Chairs and (e) a lay observer.
29. These proposed governance arrangements are similar to those of the Veterinary Nurses Council and its relationship with RCVS Council. At some point in the future consideration would be given to whether the Fellowship Board should be placed within the governance arrangements of RCVS Knowledge and/or any new Charter arrangements.

30. Each Election Panel Chair would co-ordinate a team from the 30 Election Panel Members.

31. In the first instance a Fellowship Appointment Group would establish the membership of the Fellowship Board and the Election Panel Members.

32. Once the Fellowship was established, the criteria for appointment to the panels would be the responsibility of the Fellowship. Once established, the Fellowship, under the guidance of the Chair, would decide how these positions are filled.

33. The Fellowship Appointment Group would comprise (a) the Chair of the current RCVS Fellowship Subcommittee, (b) the RCVS President, (c) a senior member of the veterinary profession and (d) a lay observer. The Fellowship Appointment Group would be chaired by Professor Lord Sandy Trees.

34. The Fellowship Appointment Group would appoint (a) the Chair, (b) three Election Panel Chairs, and (c) up to 30 Election Panel Members. The Fellowship Appointment Group would be dissolved after the initial appointments had been made.

35. The new Chair would be a high profile and energetic individual who would lead the development of the Fellowship, initially focusing on finessing the procedures and the election of new Fellows alongside developing the strategy and objectives for the Fellowship.

36. The three Election Panel Chairs would be high profile individuals who could make an informed assessment of the applicants within the relevant panel area, chair the appropriate panel meetings and work with the other Election Panel Chairs and the Fellowship Chair.

37. The Election Panel members would be appointed from existing Fellows after a request for nominations and applications. However, on an interim basis the Election Panel members could also include other suitably qualified people from the veterinary and other appropriate professions. Once the Fellowship was sufficiently large, Election Panel members would be selected solely from the Fellows.

38. Elections to Fellowship would follow a process as described below, where ultimately a list of new Fellows would be proposed to the Fellowship by the Chair.

**Application and election process**

39. Applicants would take responsibility for leading their own applications and contacting sponsors themselves.

40. Suggestions could also be made to individuals to apply and it is expected that the professional divisions of the veterinary profession and other organisations, for example, the non-territorial divisions of the BVA, could identify and support chosen applicants through the application procedure.
41. Applicants would be required to recognise the responsibilities of being an RCVS Fellow, and the
likely duties and fees that would be incurred. Duties could include, for example, participating in
evidence-based studies, undertaking evidence-based reviews, establishing and participating in lecture
programmes for the profession and the public, and mentoring younger members of the profession.

42. Applicants need to recognise the high esteem of the Fellowship and the level of achievement required for
election. Only applicants fulfilling the high standards would be elected; time served is not a replacement
for high standards.

43. There would be no application fee.

44. Applicants would submit their applications to the RCVS before a specified date each year.

45. Applications would need to include:

- Details of the applicant and their career history
- A short (25-word) citation
- A 2000-word summary describing their contribution to the advancement of the subject area, or to
  practice or the profession, depending on the route chosen
- A portfolio of material that supports their application (there is no defined structure for the portfolio but
guidance notes would be available)
- Supporting statements from three Sponsors of high professional standing (for example, Presidents of
  specialist divisions, other Fellows, RCVS Specialists, senior government officials, senior academics
  and established members of the practising arm of the profession)

46. Applications would be made to one of the three routes (see Appendix 1):

- Meritorious Contribution to Learning

or

- Meritorious Contribution to Clinical Practice

or

- Meritorious Contribution to the Profession

Many applicants are likely to have strengths in more than one route but must choose one route for the
purpose of application. The review process would be sufficiently flexible to accommodate a breadth of
contribution from applicants.

47. Election Panel Chairs would organise a review of each application by at least five Election Panel
members. Reviews would be conducted and scoring undertaken against criteria requiring that applicants
demonstrate at least national recognition for their impact in the following areas:
• Original discovery or innovative application of knowledge or development of the veterinary profession in a groundbreaking way

• Sustained contribution to scholarship

• Producing a body of creative work that shall have been disseminated, for example,
  
  a) in a body of publications
  
  b) in teaching materials used at other institutions used to drive improvements and innovations in professional practice
  
  c) in documents that have produced innovative change for the benefit of the veterinary profession

• Indisputable advancement of their subject

• Providing leadership to the veterinary profession

• Advancement of the public understanding of the veterinary profession

• Benchmarking with relevant peer groups.

48. The Election Panel Chair would rank applicants that meet or exceed the required criteria within their Panel. The Fellowship Board would meet to produce an overall ranking for all applicants for each year. Unsuccessful applications would be retained and ranked for two further consecutive years with applicants being allowed to update their applications for consideration the following year if required.

49. The Chair would then propose election of the new Fellows to the existing Fellows.

50. Once successfully elected to the Fellowship there would be no re-review but Fellows would be removed for non-payment of fees or upon ceasing to be on the RCVS Register.

51. In the absence of the Fellowship by Thesis option, the RCVS will in due course provide guidance concerning the now widely accepted routes available for veterinary surgeons and other professionals who wish to undertake doctoral-level study.
Appendix 1

Draft descriptors for the three new routes to Fellowship

Consideration for election to the RCVS Fellowship is based upon the following principles:

1. Election to the Fellowship recognises substantial and sustained achievement for veterinary surgeons and is separate to Specialist status. The Fellowship is benchmarked against awards such as the Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Science (FMedSci).

2. Fellows will have achieved at least national recognition for their impact in the areas below. ‘Time served’ is not a replacement for any of the criteria set out below:

   - Original innovative discovery or application of knowledge or development of the veterinary profession in a ground-breaking way
   - Sustained contribution to scholarship
   - Producing a body of creative work that shall have been disseminated, for example, in a body of publications, in teaching materials used at other institutions used to drive improvements and innovations in professional practice, in educational or political documents that have produced innovative change for the benefit of the veterinary profession
   - Indisputable advancement of their subject
   - Providing leadership to the veterinary profession
   - Advancement of the public understanding of the veterinary profession
   - Benchmarking with relevant peer groups
## Requirements for the three routes

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<th>Meritorious Contribution to Knowledge</th>
<th>Meritorious Contribution to Clinical Practice</th>
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<td>An expectation of outputs likely to be achieved after 15 years post-graduation</td>
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<td>A 2,000-word summary describing the outstanding contribution that has been made to the advancement of the subject</td>
<td>A 2,000-word summary describing the outstanding contribution that has been made to the advancement of the clinical discipline</td>
<td>A 2,000-word summary describing the outstanding contribution that has been made to the advancement of the profession including, for example, educational or political scholarship and leadership</td>
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<td>A portfolio that will most likely include:</td>
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<td>- The candidate’s publications</td>
<td>- A significant body of work (sufficient to be considered equivalent to doctoral standard – Level 8 in Framework for Higher Education Qualifications) that will have been disseminated and used at other institutions to drive improvements in clinical practice</td>
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<td>- Evidence of Doctoral-level achievement (PhD or other Doctorate)</td>
<td>- Evidence of leadership and mentoring in the subject area (for example, serving on national committees, training of postdoctoral scientists)</td>
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<td>- Scientific prizes and awards</td>
<td>- Clinical prizes and awards</td>
<td>- Professional prizes and awards</td>
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<td>- Demonstration of contribution to advancing the broader subject (for example, serving on scientific panels or grant-giving bodies)</td>
<td>- Demonstration of contribution to advancing the broader subject (for example, contributing to developments in related professions or disciplines, demonstrating to others the use of reflective clinical practice and audit)</td>
<td>- Demonstration of contribution to advancing the broader subject (for example, serving on educational or political committees of veterinary or related professional disciplines)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**References from three Sponsors who will be high-profile professionals.**

The referees will be asked to confirm and comment upon:

- The innovative applications leading to significant change achieved by the candidate
- The scholarly contribution of the candidate and benefits achieved for the veterinary profession
- How the candidate has provided leadership and mentoring for the veterinary profession
- How the candidate has contributed to the public understanding of the work of the veterinary profession
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RCVS Knowledge

The RCVS Charitable Trust is an independent charity and re-launched as ‘RCVS Knowledge’ in July 2013, refocusing its mission on supporting evidence-based veterinary medicine.

RCVS Knowledge houses the College’s extensive and important historical collection, showing the profession’s achievements and development up to the present day. It also runs the Library and Information Service, providing an important resource of current scientific and technical knowledge for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.

RCVS Knowledge has recently embarked on an exciting project to build an evidence-based veterinary medicine network, enabling the production of high quality evidence-based resources of practical veterinary knowledge to benefit veterinary professionals globally.

Through conferences and seminars, RCVS Knowledge will be building a programme of events to highlight its work; provide advice, information and education to the profession; and enable widespread networking.

Through its grants and awards programme, RCVS Knowledge will be following best practice in providing an open, ethical process for the identification and selection of first-rate research ideas, together with an awards programme that recognises past and current achievement within the profession, principally in veterinary research.

With its forward-looking and exciting new strategy, RCVS Knowledge would be well placed to house the new Fellowship that is being proposed for the College. Fellows would have access to the excellent information facilities and events provided by RCVS Knowledge, as well as serving as a pool of eminent experts to help RCVS Knowledge realise its goals to further evidence-based veterinary medicine.

For more information about RCVS Knowledge, please visit: knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/home.
Examples of other learned societies

Academy of Medical Sciences

Founded in 1998 as an independent body representing the diverse spectrum of medical science from research through clinical application to healthcare delivery, the heart of the Academy is the Fellowship – the most eminent UK researchers who have made transformative contributions to medical science.

The excellence of the Fellows’ science, their contribution to medicine and society and the range of their achievements are reflected throughout the Academy’s work. Through prize lectures, awards and election of Fellows, the Academy seeks to recognise the best talent in medical science in all its diverse forms and to champion new knowledge and its translation into patient benefits (AMS, Annual Report 2013).

Fellows of the Academy are elected for exceptional contributions to the medical sciences either in the form of original discovery or of sustained contributions to scholarship. Candidates are drawn from clinical academic medicine, veterinary science, dentistry, laboratory science, medical and nursing care and other professions allied to medical science. The majority of candidates will be selected primarily for their outstanding contribution to the advancement of medical science, or for the application of existing scientific knowledge or understanding in an innovative way, so as to bring about advances in human health and welfare.

A smaller number of candidates may be elected who have made an outstanding contribution in other ways:

- Those who have made a contribution to medical science by leadership, inspiration or the furtherance of medical science in a senior management or administrative capacity.
- Those who have raised the public understanding or appreciation of medical science.
- Those who in other ways have rendered a conspicuous service to medical science.

There are currently 1,094 Fellows of the Academy, 48% non-clinical and 52% clinical.

Election process

- An annual election is overseen by the Registrar, supported by the Fellowship Officer.

- Only Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences may nominate a candidate for Fellowship. Candidates must be supported by three Fellows: a Principal, second and third nominator. Candidates nominated for the first time are automatically eligible for election for five consecutive years.
After the fifth (unsuccessful) election, the candidate will lapse for a period of two years before they can be re-nominated.

Seven Sectional Committees scrutinise candidates and make recommendations to Council for election. Committee members each serve for three years.

The number of Fellows to be elected each year should not exceed 44. Of this number, up to 37 may be assigned to the Sectional Committees and up to seven may be reserved as ‘floating’ candidates that can be used to elect additional Fellows in any of the sections or to build capacity in new areas.

The Academy engages in a range of activities promoting medical sciences, including:

- Offering grants to biomedical researchers in partnership with other research funders
- Running a mentoring scheme for postdoctoral researchers
- Organising scientific meetings, workshops, and career development events
- Convening meetings to address major policy topics, such as public health
- Publish reports of working groups and taskforces on various projects

**Funding**

The Academy is funded by subscriptions from its Fellowship, voluntary donations, grant-in-aid from the Department of Health, and revenue from its events (some of which are open to the public).

**Royal Society of Edinburgh**

The RSE is an educational charity, established in 1783 for “the advancement of learning and useful knowledge”. It has 1,500 Fellows, which together provide independent and expert advice, sharing knowledge and information on matters of scientific, economic, social and cultural importance.

The RSE, with the support of partner bodies, provides funding to support research and collaborative programmes in a wide variety of areas, including science, technology, engineering, mathematics, arts and humanities. It promotes excellence through the award of prizes and medals, and runs an events programme, including lectures.

Candidates for Fellowship are nominated by existing Fellows. There is a five-stage annual selection process, involving sectional and sector committees where candidates are ranked on a scale against the required criteria, and culminating in a ballot of the whole Fellowship.

The RSE publishes event reports, policy papers, inquiry reports and various learned journals.

Royal Academy of Engineering

Through its Fellowship, the Royal Academy of Engineering honours the UK’s most distinguished engineers. It aims to take advantage of the enormous wealth of engineering knowledge they possess and, through the interdisciplinary character of its membership, it provides a unique breadth of engineering experience to further the art and practice of engineering in all its forms.

Election to The Academy is by invitation only; up to 60 Fellows are elected each year from nominations made by existing Fellows.

The RAEng is funded through grants from government to promote engineering, subscriptions, events and facilities hire, and donations.
Appendix 4

Questions for consultation

We are keen to hear your views about these new proposals.

Please help us by completing the online survey which can be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/rcvsfellowship

If you are unable to complete the survey online, please tick the appropriate answers below and either scan and email pages 18-23 to education@rcvs.org.uk, or post to the address shown on the back cover, thank you.

Responses must be received by Friday 4 July 2014.

When submitting your responses to this consultation, please be aware that the RCVS may publish some or all of the responses it receives, together with a list of people and organisations who have responded. Please indicate in your response if you are not content for your name and comments to be made publicly available when the Working Party publishes its report.

1. I am responding
   • as an individual [Please go to question 2]
   • on behalf of an organisation [Please go to question 6]

2. Your name: ____________________________________________

3. Your email: ____________________________________________

4. Please tick one of the following:
   • Member of the RCVS (MRCVS) on the practising register
   • Member of the RCVS (MRCVS) on the non-practising register
   • Fellow of the RCVS (FRCVS)
   • Honorary Fellow of the RCVS (HonFRCVS)
   • Veterinary surgeon not currently registered with the RCVS
   • Registered veterinary nurse
   • Other (please specify) ____________________________
5. If you are a veterinary surgeon or a veterinary nurse, which of these is your MAIN employment? (Please tick one only)

- Mixed practice
- Small animal/exotic practice
- Equine practice
- Farm/Production animals
- Other first opinion practice
- Referral practice/consultancy
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Animal Health Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA)
- Other UK government
- Overseas government
- Veterinary school
- Other university/education
- Commerce and industry
- Charities and trusts
- Research Council
- Other

Please specify other: __________________________________

[Please go to question 7]

6. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please give the name of the organisation on whose behalf you are responding.

________________________________________________________________________

Name: _________________________________________________________________

Position: _______________________________________________________________

Email:  _________________________________________________________________
We would like to gather your views on the proposals for the new RCVS Fellowship contained in this consultation paper. Please read the consultation document carefully, then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by ticking one option on each row. If you do not know how to answer, or would prefer not to answer, please leave it blank.

7. In general terms, I support the proposals for the new RCVS Fellowship.
   
   strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree

8. The criteria for appointment to Fellowship are clear and transparent.
   
   strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree

9. The proposals for the new Fellowship will create more opportunity for a wider range of vets to become Fellows than under the old system.
   
   strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree

10. For veterinary surgeons working in general practice, non-specialist and non-academic environments, undertaking a professional Doctorate (e.g., DProf, VetMD, DVS, DVM, DVetMed) that is quality-assured through a university is a fairer and more consistent route to undertake a thesis that might contribute to their Fellowship portfolio.

   strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree

11. Closing the route to Fellowship by examination of a thesis may make it more difficult for vets in general practice to achieve a Fellowship.
    
    strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree

12. I agree with the concept of the RCVS Fellowship as a learned society.
    
    strongly disagree / disagree / neither / agree / strongly agree
13. Are there additional criteria that might be considered for the ‘Meritorious Contribution to Knowledge’ route?

Yes/No If yes, please comment

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

14. Are there additional criteria that might be considered for the ‘Meritorious Contribution to Practice’ route?

Yes/No If yes, please comment

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

15. Are there additional criteria that might be considered for the ‘Meritorious Contribution to the Profession’ route?

Yes/No If yes, please comment

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________
16. If you are a vet who is not currently a Fellow, would becoming a Fellow be something you might aspire to in the future?

- Yes
- Maybe at some time in the future
- No, I am not interested in achieving a Fellowship
- Don’t know

17. Does the difference between MRCVS and FRCVS hold any relevance for you or your clients?

- It is relevant to me but NOT to my clients
- It is relevant to me and to some of my clients
- It is NOT relevant to me and NOT relevant to my clients
- It is NOT relevant to me, but may be relevant to some of my clients

18. In your view, will the proposed changes increase or decrease the relevance of FRCVS?

- Likely to increase the relevance of FRCVS
- Likely to decrease the relevance of FRCVS
- Likely to neither increase, nor decrease the relevance of FRCVS
- Don’t know
19. Please add any additional comments you may have about the proposed changes to the RCVS Fellowship.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

20. My responses and comments may be made publicly available when the Working Party publishes its report.

I agree / I do not agree